

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the office action dated January 25, 2006.

The examiner has rejected claims 1, 8, 17, 19 and 20-21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the examiner states "The mentioned claims above are lacking support in the specification, as it fails to support the matter of not usage of remote computer for connection." The examiner is directed to paragraphs [0034] and [0035], with referenced figures, and elsewhere, in the applicant's specification for support of network printer status detection by direct communication between a local print processor and the network printer without accessing a remote computer.

Paragraphs [0034] and [0035], with referenced figures, in the applicant's specification describe a status detecting print processor (SDPP) accessing a network printer directly, that is, without access or connection to a remote computer such as a server, to determine the status of the network printer. In paragraph [0034], determination of the online/offline status of the printer by the SDPP is described through use of a ping. Paragraph [0035] describes embodiments of the applicant's invention in which communication protocols, one example of which is Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP), are employed by the SDPP to directly communicate with the network printing device. Accordingly, this aspect of the claims is supported in the specification, and this rejection to the above mentioned claims should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claims 1, 6-8 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Carney et al. (US Patent 6,584,503), hereinafter ("Carney et al.").

Claim 19 has been cancelled.

Carney et al. teaches a computer monitoring networked devices. The invention of Carney et al. attempts discovery and status monitoring as an ongoing monitoring process and does not receive print tasks from print drivers. While Carney et al. monitors printer status, Carney et al. has no provision for interacting with, or managing print jobs. Further, Carney et al. wastes network bandwidth with detection processes that are not directly linked to a specific print job. Carney et al. actually teaches away from these claims by using a dedicated monitor application that uses resources for ongoing monitoring that is not associated with a specific printer activity or demand. These claims describe a print-task-initiated process that uses minimal bandwidth and resources to detect printer availability at the time printing is requested. This process obviates the need for a more complex dedicated monitoring system as taught in Carney et al.

Regarding independent claim 1 and claims 6 and 7, which are dependent thereon and comprise all the limitations therein. Claim 1 has been amended to comprise the elements of:

*“receiving a print task from a print driver at a local print processor; and
detecting, in response to said receiving, the status of a printer on a
network from said local print processor to determine the availability of
said printer through a direct communication between said local print
processor and said printer, wherein said communication does not access a
remote computer.”*

These elements are not present in Carney et al. as Carney et al. does not teach any interaction with a print task in any form. Further, monitoring in Carney et al. is an ongoing process and is not performed in response to an event, for example receiving a print task.

Regarding independent claim 8. Claim 8 has been amended to comprise the elements of:

“receiving a print task from a print driver at a local, status-detecting print processor;

detecting, in response to said receiving, through a direct communication between said local, status-detecting print processor and at least one printing device, the status of said at least one printing device;”

which are not present in Carney et al. as stated above.

Regarding independent claim 17 and claim 18, which is dependent thereon and comprises all the limitations therein. Claim 17 has been amended to more clearly show that the print task is local. Claim 17 comprises the element of:

“interpreting local print task data;”

and this element is not present in Carney et al. as Carney et al. does not teach any interaction with a print task in any form.

Regarding independent claim 20. Claim 20 has been amended to more clearly show that the print task is local. Claim 20 comprises the element of:

“instructions for interpreting local print task data;”

and this element is not present in Carney et al. as Carney et al. does not teach any interaction with a print task in any form.

Claims 1, 6-8 and 17, 18, and 20, as amended, are now in allowable form and the rejection to these claims should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claims 2-5 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Carney et al. (US Patent 6,584,503), hereinafter (“Carney et al.”), in view of Snipp (US Patent 5,699,495), hereinafter (“Snipp”).

Regarding claims 2-5, which are dependent on claim 1 and comprise all the limitations therein. Claim 1 has been amended and comprises the elements of:

“receiving a print task from a print driver at a local print processor; and detecting, in response to said receiving, the status of a printer on a network from said local print processor to determine the availability of said printer through a direct communication between said local print processor and said printer, wherein said communication does not access a remote computer.”

While Snipp mentions a print task, Snipp does not disclose sending the print task to a local print processor that performs printer status detection through direct communication with a printer. Furthermore, the combination of Snipp and Carney et al. does not perform status detection in response to receiving a print task. The combination of Snipp and Carney et al. does not disclose the elements of claim 1, as amended, and since claims 2-5 are dependent on claim 1, this rejection of claims 2-5 should be withdrawn.

Regarding claim 10, which is dependent on claim 8 and comprises all the limitations therein. The elements of claim 8 of:

“receiving a print task from a print driver at a local, status-detecting print processor;

detecting, *in response to said receiving*, through a direct communication between said local, status-detecting print processor and at least one printing device, the status of said at least one printing device;”

are not present in the combination of Carney et al. and Snipp as argued above. This rejection of claim 10 should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claims 9, and 11-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Carney et al. (US Patent 6,584,503), hereinafter (“Carney et al.”), in view of Snipp (US Patent 5,699,495), hereinafter (“Snipp”), and further in view of Mima et al. (Pub. No. US20020101604), hereinafter (“Mima et al.”).

Mima et al. teaches a complex networked system with a network print monitor 17 residing on a remote computing device 7 that is separate from a client computer 3, 5 and separate from other computing devices on which printer monitors 19a-19c run. Mima et al. states (page 3, paragraphs 39-40) that each of printer systems 1-3, which contain the printer monitors, may be a “combination of a computer and a printer or a printer incorporating a computer.” Mima et al. further states (page 3, paragraph 40) that the network print monitor 17 is in computer 7. Accordingly, the system taught by Mima et al. comprises at least three computers for a client, a network print monitor and a printer system. The claimed invention of the applicant comprises direct communication between a local print processor and a network printing device, without accessing a remote computer.

Specifically regarding claims 9 and 11, which are dependent on claim 8 and comprise all the limitations therein, and claims 12-14, which are dependent on claim 11, which is dependent on claim 8 and, therefore, comprise all the limitations therein. The elements of:

“receiving a print task from a print driver at a local, status-detecting print processor;

detecting, in response to said receiving, through a direct communication between said local, status-detecting print processor and at least one printing device, the status of said at least one printing device;”

are not present in the combination of Carney et al., Snipp, and Mima et al. This rejection of claims 9 and 11-14 should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claims 15-16 and 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mima et al. (Pub. No. US20020101604), hereinafter (“Mima et al.”) in view of Carney et al. (US Patent 6,584,503), hereinafter (“Carney et al.”).

The combination of Mima et al. and Carney et al. does not disclose a method for detecting the status of printers on a network using a local print processor, especially through the use of a direct local print processor to printing device communication.

Regarding independent claim 15 and claim 16, which is dependent on claim 15 and comprises all the limitations therein. The combination of Mima et al. and Carney et al. does not teach the element of:

“a status-detecting local print processor (SDPP) wherein said SDPP can detect the status of a printing device by direct communication with said printing device.”

Regarding independent claim 21 and claims 22-24, which are dependent on claim 21 and comprise all the limitations therein. Claim 21, as amended, comprises the element of:

“detecting, from said local print processor, the status of a plurality of printing devices comprising said preferred printer group *through direct communication between said local print processor and said printing devices without receiving printer information from a remote computer;*”

which is not present in the combination of Mima et al. and Carney et al.

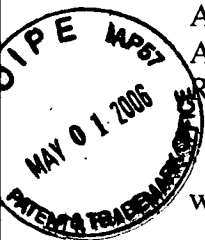
This rejection of claims 15-16 and 21-24 should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claims 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mima et al. (Pub. No. US20020101604), hereinafter (“Mima et al.”), in view of Carney et al. (US Patent 6,584,503), hereinafter (“Carney et al.”), and further in view of Yacoub (US Patent 6,552,813), hereinafter (“Yacoub”).

Yacoub discloses a remote-computer-based method of allowing the user a choice of waiting if an error signal indicates a busy printer.

Claims 25 and 26 are dependent on claim 21 and comprise all the limitations therein. Claim 21, as amended, comprises the element of:

“detecting, from said local print processor, the status of a plurality of printing devices comprising said preferred printer group through direct communication between said local print processor and said printing devices without receiving printer information from a remote computer;”



Appl. No. 09/681,409

Amdt. Dated April 25, 2006

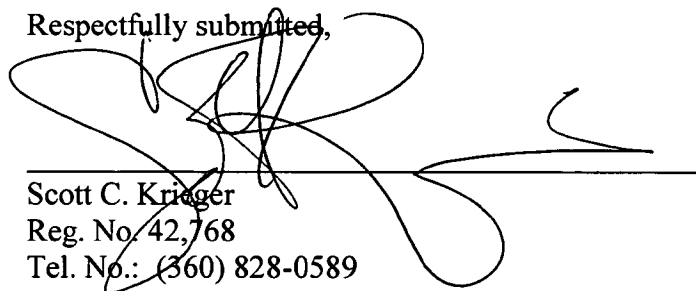
Reply to Office Action of January 25, 2006

which is not present in the combination of Mima et al., Carney et al., and Yacoub. This rejection of claims 25 and 26 should be withdrawn.

The examiner has rejected claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 19 has been cancelled.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott C. Krieger
Reg. No. 42,768
Tel. No.: (360) 828-0589